

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claim Status

Claims 69 through 76 are now pending in the application. Claim 69 has been amended to even more succinctly define the invention and/or to improve its form. Claims 70 through 76 have been added to accord Applicants an additional scope of protection commensurate with the disclosure. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added. Claim 69 is the only independent claim in the application.

Section 103 Rejection

Claim 69 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over any one of Japanese Patent Document Nos. 55-35247, 52-144071, 52-144072, 52-144073, and 7-205274 in view of either 55-57429, or 63-237928.

The rationale underlying each of the rejections is succinctly set forth in the Official Action.

Traversal of Rejection

The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Japanese Patent Document Nos. 55-35247, 52-144071, 52-144072, and 52-144073 (included among the “primary citations”) each disclose methods of manufacturing a tubular film. Applicants submit that this cited art does not disclose that leading and trailing ends of a sheet film are positional approximately on a line normal to an outer surface of a

columnar member upon which the sheet film is wound so that the leading and trailing ends do not overlap.

Japanese Patent Document No. 7-205274 (also included among the “primary citations”) discloses that leading and trailing ends of a wound sheet film are heat melt bonded together. Applicants submit that this patent document does not disclose that entire sheet film is heated along with the columnar member and the tubular molding member as recited in amended Claim 69.

The Examiner recognizes that the primary citations do not teach aspects of the invention recited in independent Claim 69. More specifically, the Examiner recognizes that Japanese Patent Document Nos. 55-35247, 52-144071, 52-144072, or 55-144073 fail to teach a tubular member about the wound film to mold and join the film ends together to make the tubular member. Further, the Examiner recognizes that Japanese Patent Document No. 7-205274, like Japanese Patent Document Nos. 55-35247, 52-144071, 52-144072, or 55-144073 fail to teach use of an exterior mold about the film in the heat welding of the ends of the film to form the tubular member. Accordingly, the Examiner looks to Japanese Patent Document Nos. 55-57429 and 63-237928 (the “secondary citations”) for allegedly teaching these aspects of the claimed invention.

Japanese Patent Document No. 63-237928 discusses providing a PTFE tubular molded product 3 over one side end of PTFE tubular body 1. A heat resistant rod-like core body is provided within an end part of tubular body 1. A heat-resistant joining jig 4 is arranged closely to an external circumferential surface of the tubular molded product 3. As understood, the jig 4 *per se* is heated to a melting point or higher of the PTFE. This

document does not teach heating the film, a columnar member, and a molding member to temperature to connect the ends of the film.

Japanese Patent Document No. 55-57429 discloses that a single flat PTFE sheet is rolled as shown in Figure 2, and the rolled PTFE sheet is inserted into a space 4 between a core molding member 2 and a tubular molding member 1. Subsequently, the PTFE sheet is heated by an electric furnace and is softened. This patent document does not teach winding the film with at least two turns. Since only a single PTFE sheet is loaded into the space, there is a tendency for the rolled sheet to return to a flat state from the rolled state when placed into the space 4. Accordingly, there is no assurance that the ends of the sheet will be joined at and much less joined with a uniform thickness.

It is also respectfully submitted that the combination rejection is not well founded. The Examiner has merely asserted that it would be obvious to employ the techniques of either one of the secondary citations with the teachings of the primary citations based on the benefits of doing so. A combination rejection is proper only when there is some suggestion or motivation in the cited art *per se* to cause one having ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of the cited art. There is nothing in the cited art which supports the position that their respective teachings can be combined in the manner suggested. Even if the teachings in the cited art could be so combined, the mere fact that such can be combined is not sufficient if there is no suggestions in the art that such a combination is desirable. For example, see ACS Hospital Systems, Inc. v. Montefiore Hospital, 221 U.S.P.Q. 929, 933 (Fed. Cir. 1984).

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claim 69 is allowable over the cited art whether taken individually or in combination.

Dependent Claims

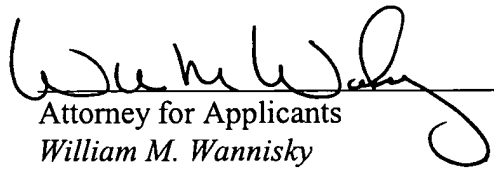
Claims 70 through 76 depend either directly or indirectly from Claim 69 and are allowable by virtue of their dependency and in their own right for further defining Applicant's invention. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Closing Comments

It is respectfully submitted that the claims on file are allowable over the art of record and that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application are earnestly solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our New York office at the address shown below.

Respectfully submitted,


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